

Overview of Shipper Strategies

Truck and rail operators are using a multitude of strategies to reduce the environmental impacts of carrying America's freight. Shippers are working to do their part too, not only by implementing measures at their own facilities that improve efficiency and lead to emissions reductions, but by also hiring the most environmentally responsible carriers. The following technologies and strategies are just some of the measures shippers can adopt to facilitate reductions in fuel consumption and emissions associated with freight shipping activities.

Intermodal Shipping

Many goods and materials may be delivered to distribution hubs more efficiently by rail than by truck.

- Intermodal shipping combines the fuel efficiency of rail with the logistical strengths of trucking.
- Standardized containers are easily transferred from rail to truck and vice versa.
- Intermodal shipping can minimize overall fuel consumption, reduce emissions, and lower the costs of freight delivery.

Driver Comfort Stations

Drivers endure a great deal of discomfort in the course of their work day, some of which is spent idling their trucks to stay comfortable at docking facilities.

- Shippers can provide climate controlled comfort stations at docking facilities so that drivers won't need to idle their trucks to stay warm or cold, as the case may be.
- Eliminating idling not only has obvious fuel, emissions and maintenance benefits, but improved driver comfort enhances safety.

Preferential Loading and Unloading

SmartWay Transport Shippers can support the goals of the Partnership by providing special docking privileges for SmartWay Transport Carriers.

- Deliveries by Partner carriers may be given prime docking times and positions.
- Selected docks may be designated as "SmartWay Transport Docks".

Idle Reduction Policies

Shippers usually have control over access to their docking facilities including any parking or waiting areas.

- Shippers may implement a "No Idling" policy for any trucks picking up from or delivering to its facilities.
- No Idling Policies may best be combined with driver comfort stations, so Drivers have an alternative to idling their trucks while waiting.
- Idling reductions have immediate benefits for local communities, especially in urban areas where environmental justice may be a concern.

Improved Pickup and Delivery Scheduling

Excess waiting time for drivers often leads to excess idling and the increased fuel use and emissions.

- Shippers can improve scheduling with enhanced communications or logistics software.
- Improved scheduling of pickups and delivery reduces excess idling and improves the on-time efficiency of freight operations.

Full Truckloads

Goods and materials are sometimes shipped on partially loaded trucks in the interest of expediency, increasing overall fuel use and shipping costs.

- Shippers can improve truckload scheduling with freight logistics software that helps to plan shipping full loads.
- Full truckloads not only improve efficiency but also help reduce congestion on the roadways and at docking facilities.

Shipper Corporate Fleet Improvements

Shippers often have small fleets of light duty vehicles (cars and light-trucks) used around their facilities or for staff travel.

- Reducing older vehicles with more fuel- efficient and lower emitting vehicles reduces a company's overall environmental impact.

Warehouse Improvements

Shippers should consider any improvements in and around warehouses that will facilitate improved efficiency and emissions reductions.

- Warehouse operations can have a direct impact on the efficient loading and unloading of delivery trucks.
- Shippers should explore any efficiency gains that can be made with improved storage and warehouse logistics techniques.

Electric Forklifts

Many freight facilities still use diesel-powered forklifts to carry pallets, crates, etc. between the dock and warehouse.

- Electric forklifts are cleaner and more efficient to operate, producing no emissions at the facility.
- Utilizing electric forklifts reduces a company's environmental impact and improves ambient air quality in and around freight docking areas.
- Facilities might also consider alternatively fueled forklifts that run on compressed natural gas or propane.